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ABSTRACT

Community college instructors have, of their own volition, isolated themselves from the academic disciplines in which they were trained, from the universities and the secondary schools, and from the broad currents of the two-year colleges. This reclusive complex stems from three phenomena, one relating to the teacher as human being and academician, another to recent developments in the community college field, and the third to teaching itself. As an academician, the community college instructor prides himself on privacy and teaching self-sufficiency. Because of this, instructors are reluctant to consider ideas posed by anyone outside of their own teaching environments. Furthermore, community college instructors are often divorced from contact with others in their own disciplines, read few scholarly or professional journals, and are unlikely to join professional associations. Regarding trends in the community college field, community college instructors tend to ignore part-time faculty in their own fields, and, because of the growing average size of institutions, see themselves as isolated from other groups in the college community. Because teaching innovations have gone largely unrewarded in the past, faculty tend to be static in their methods, and to ignore or reassign innovators to instructional coordinator classifications. (Author/NHM)

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The Faculty Member as Recluse

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Stereotyping is a common practice. Most of us adopt or erect categories into which we place observed phenomena as a way of ordering the myriad impressions we receive. Children, foreigners, lawyers, doctors, women, old people, people with shifty eyes--mention of any of these triggers a patterned response because, in our minds, all form into groups. My work centers on community colleges, especially community college faculty, curriculum, and instruction and I do my share of stereotyping about these matters. In Confronting Identity, a book Florence Brawer and I authored in 1971, we made our own contribution to categorizing by posing three types of instructors--model, mediator, and manager. Tonight I want to relate some of my recent observations on the faculty and to pose a new way of perceiving them.

A couple of years after Confronting Identity, in a book entitled Toward a Professional Faculty, I extended the definition of the faculty members who see themselves as managers of student learning, stating that here was the type that would lead the faculty toward professionalism. I saw the professional instructor working within a body of knowledge not readily available to lay persons, a body of knowledge stemming from the discipline of instruction. The instructional manager was one who adhered to this discipline, engaging in the various processes that it implies,

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predicting student change, reporting student learning. And I concluded that because of rapid diffusion of faculty inservice training, faculty evaluation, instructional assistance to the faculty, and, not least, faculty acceptance of the use of objectives, reproducible media, and validated tests, the professionalization of the faculty was proceeding apace.

So professionalization is occurring, and many faculty are indeed advancing its development. But what of those who are not? What of the faculty who do not accept instruction as a discipline, whose contact with their parent academic discipline has eroded, and who deliberately sequester themselves away from the moving ideas of the community college? I speak here not of the time-servers, the clock punchers who seek only to reduce their working hours. Every occupational group has its share of them; let them go in peace. I speak rather of the instructors who feel they are involved in their teaching but who are in fact not developing within the profession, not using the profession to enhance their own growth as human beings, not advancing the profession itself.

I would pose a new term for describing these instructors. I see them as recluses, as self-styled pariahs, isolated from the academic disciplines in which they were trained, from the universities and the secondary schools, and from the broad currents of the two-year colleges, their host institutions. They are in an eddy away from the main stream. And they have placed themselves there of their own volition.

This is not to say that all faculty other than those who are advancing the profession are reclusive. Nor is it to say that those who are, are perforce cut off from other aspects of their life; they may be

quite related to family, friends, students, and like-minded colleagues. But I think it is worth exploring the pariah complex as an aid to understanding the way many instructors behave in relation to their work. Unfortunately "pariah" is not precisely descriptive because it connotes a group placed apart by others, not the case with the faculty. However the psychological terminology describing people who deliberately set themselves apart--"alien" or "distantiated" individuals--is not quite right either. So for want of a better word let us call these people pariahs and examine the dimensions of the category.

The pariah complex stems from three phenomena, one relating to the teacher as human being and academician, another to recent developments in the community college field, the third with teaching itself.

The Academician -- A teacher's attitudes toward teaching are undoubtedly shaped by his own personality, early experiences, mentors, colleagues, institutional climate--a complex of prior and coterminous events. The role itself plays a part. As long ago as 1932 Willard Waller traced this effect. In his book, The Sociology of Teaching, he discussed the phenomenon of teaching as one of conflict, with the individual on one occasion saying to the student, "I am your teacher. Do as I say!" and on the other, "But I am also a human being and a good fellow. We have some good times together, don't we?". He identified this rhythmic contraction and expansion of the instructor's personality as having an insidious effect on the person. Kevin Ryan has also noted "...the problem of pedagogical schizophrenia--the phenomenon of reconciling two personalities: the human being and the disciplinarian..." (1970, p. 4).

In her intensive study of a group of two-year college faculty members, Leslie Purdy discusses how a person may have some basic orientation toward teaching, may have a picture of self in role "but once on the job, the attitudes are altered and shaped by peer attitudes and norms, by experiences from teaching itself, and by other aspects of the teaching environment." This is a private environment, one with jealously guarded covenants regarding work space. Purdy discerned that, "One attitude toward teaching expressed by many teachers ...is that teaching is and should be a solo activity, one teacher and one or more students. The privateness and the self-sufficiency of teachers in a classroom is a cherished part of teaching. Many instructors resisted any teaching method which would require sharing responsibility with another person for a class.... Deciding what will go on in a course and then enacting that plan is seen as a personal challenge to each teacher.... A common understanding existed that each teacher privately and individually face his or her own teaching. No one can stand in for another teacher...." Most teachers, Purdy points out, feel a need for hands-on involvement in order to get feedback from their students. This leads them to be possessive about their classes. Many instructors' idea of academic freedom is translated as, "My right to do what I want in my class." Further, Purdy related how "Instructors would only accept advice from someone else who had gone through the fires, experienced the traumas and successes of teaching. Recommendations about a new teaching method coming from faculty members are more likely to be considered by teachers while information presented by administrators...can be ignored."

Purdy's statements about teaching as a solo activity, teacher privacy, and the reluctance to consider ideas posed by administrators in one college, were confirmed in a nationwide study of two-year college humanities instructors that

we conducted last year. When asked, "How would you rate the following as sources of advice on teaching?" more than 90% of the respondents said their colleagues were, "quite useful" or, "somewhat useful" and nearly the same number found students, "quite useful" or "somewhat useful." Department chairpersons, university professors, professional journals, programs of professional organizations, high school teachers, and administrators were far down on the line as other choices, in that order.

These attitudes are not confined to the two-year college level. In the April issue of Change Magazine David Riesman discusses how faculty "are oriented ... to students and teaching and are often inimical to discipline and to disciplines and to what they see as dehydrated specialization. Sometimes they use unionization and sometimes evaluation by students to protect themselves from the need for scholarly visibility both inside and outside their institutions. Academia is witnessing a new provincialism--not the provincialism of one's discipline,...but the perhaps more destructive or insidious, although less evident, provincialism of captivity by one's student disciples, charismatically courted as the road not only to retention but to feelings of worth."

What is happening is that a new ethos is taking hold, one in which faculty take pride in severing themselves from outside ideas as well as from outside people. And if Riesman has seen this phenomenon in the university, where there has been a tradition of scholarship and cosmopolitanism, think how much more it is accentuated in the two-year college whose roots are in the local community and where academic disciplinary affiliation has always been weak. Our nationwide Faculty Survey found 26 percent who by their own admission read no scholarly journals; 64 percent who read no

journals related to professional education or to teaching in their field. And the faculty teaching in the humanities--history, literature, philosophy, and so on--were found to be little more committed to the humanities than were a comparison group of instructors in other areas. The lines of an adisciplinary group emerged, one that is tending to abandon the academic, and not replace it with anything of substance.

One anecdote to illustrate the point about the individual practitioner divorced from his discipline: in connection with our project on the humanities, earlier this year we convened seminars in Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington, as a way of disseminating our findings and establishing guidelines for the next phase of the project. We invited many presidents, deans, chairpersons, professional association heads, faculty members, and others to discuss trends in the humanities, needed action to support them, implications of our project, and so on. Upon being invited, one community college humanities division chairperson called "for more information." When I recounted what we would be discussing, he said, "I would like to come but I am afraid I could not participate in the dialogue. I know nothing about the topic. I can't define the humanities. I can't discuss them. I would be able only to listen."

The Community Colleges -- Let us turn now to recent developments in community colleges and, as we do, let us shed a tear for the faculty member who began his career in the 1950's or '60's. When he came into the institution it was billed as the first two years of college. His courses were to be equivalent to those offered at a four-year college or university. Certainly there were vocational programs but they were offered in another building somewhere else, on a different part of the campus. And certainly there was the problem of accommodating students

of low ability, but there were not many of them, and one could always fail them without excessive concern.

Now the institutions seem to have gone into some other business. The occupational programs grow ever larger. There seem to be more low-ability students, more remedial courses. And what is this "community-based education" that the instructor hears so much about? He might have accepted the move toward remedial work--at least it took the form of courses with students sitting in the classroom and there was some relationship to academic teaching. But one-day programs on purchasing real estate? Assisting community groups to organize and petition for redress of grievances? Giving credit to people who use the college's swimming pool on hot summer days? Even the marginally astute instructor recognizes this trend for what it is. It is the college saying, in effect,"We have given up trying to remedy student defects in reading, ability to analyze arguments, values, and logical interpretation--the traditional role of general education--and we are going to pander to community desires for entertainment and recreation." What is left for the instructor? Whatever affinity he once had for history, literature, biology, or philosophy has been eroded by his lack of affiliation with like-minded members of those disciplines over the years. He can reduce content to satisfy remedial students and still have a course retain some semblance of itself. But what is he to make of the funds and recognition that go into Health Fairs, community art projects, and modular courses on "How to Deal in the Commodities Market?"

Ten years ago, twenty years ago, when most faculty were recruited from secondary schools, there was a feeling of challenge in the new level of education. The move from high school to college brought a perceived increase

in status along with a reduction in the number of required teaching hours from thirty to fifteen. Greater status and half a teaching load--quite a giant step! And the high growth rate in the Fifties and Sixties brought other benefits. Colleges were able to sweep problems under the rug because there were ever more students, ever more funds. Personnel who were non-productive, uncooperative, or essentially disturbed could be shunted to out-of-the-way corners of the institution if necessary. There was always something for them to do, always new faculty members to take their place. From the standpoint of the individual instructor there were new colleagues to be indoctrinated and all the excitement that goes with establishing new relationships.

Now there is no place to move. The instructor in the two-year college is at a dead-end. He cannot realistically aspire to a position in a four-year institution. Even though three-fourths of the respondents to the humanities Faculty Survey said they would find a position in a four-year college or university "attractive," this door is open to very few. The senior institutions have many places from which to recruit instructors, and they tend not to look to people who have been socialized at another level of education.

The reduction in growth has had other effects. Many colleges have ceased employing full-time instructors--even as replacements. Part-timers paid on an hourly rate are being used to fill classes whenever a full-timer retires or leaves the institution for any reason. Frequently employed at the last minute, the part-timers have little affinity for the institution, and certainly little if any contact with the full-time instructors.

What is the full-time instructor to make of his institution's tendency to employ part-timers? Data from our humanities Faculty Survey reveal that

part-time instructors differ from full-timers in that the part-timers are less experienced, read even fewer scholarly or professional journals, are less likely to be a member of a professional association, are less concerned with research, less concerned with curriculum and instruction, less concerned with the humanities, and more likely to hold the university as a reference group. Clearly this is a different type of population, one with which the full-time instructor has little in common. Inexorably, year after year, the percent of courses taught by this variant group grows larger. Where is the consistency in curriculum, the collegial interaction, the commonality of objectives or desired learning outcomes?

And yet why should the part-time faculty not be growing in number? They meet their classes, give their lectures, hear student recitals, turn their grades in on time. Put another way, what can the full-time faculty do that the part-timers cannot? Do not respond that full-timers have more experience, read more journals, are more concerned with curriculum and instruction, more interested in research. They are, but what do they <u>do</u>? What is that body of specialized knowledge that they bring to bear on problems of instruction? Are they more likely to employ specific measurable objectives? Validated criterion-referenced testing devices? Are they more likely to report student learning in terms that have clear and consistent referent? The answer is that if the full-timers insist on closing the door to their classroom and hiding behind perquisites in their contract so that no one knows the extent to which their students have learned, it is impossible to tell. We seek evidence that their students learn more than students taught by the part-timers. Until it appears, why should a district hire full-timers at all, with the necessity of paying them more salary and fringe benefits, and being obligated

to them for continuity of employment? The full-timers know this, but shy away from responding to the challenge.

Further, when the full-time faculty form themselves into a bargaining agent they often exclude the part-timers. Granted they may want to isolate themselves because of feelings that the institution belongs to those who are wholly dedicated to it. The part-timers come and go, they say, lacking committment to--or responsibility for--institutional or departmental policy. But for how long do they think the part-timers will stand aside without organizing themselves? Even now in some colleges there are two locals of the same union, one for the full-timers and one for the part-timers, both bargaining separately. And the part-time group grows ever larger. The full-timers shrink in number, in power, in affiliation.

Institutional size too has an effect on the faculty. The Faculty Survey revealed some information about instructors' relatedness to others. On a projective question asking how respondents saw themselves in relation to different groups listed, the larger the college the higher the percent of instructors who saw the administrators as a tightly-knit group with the instructor himself standing apart from it. Further, the larger the college, the higher the percent of instructors who saw themselves as standing apart from their teacher colleagues. Clearly as the colleges grow larger--and now one-half the faculty in American two-year colleges teach in institutions with greater than 10,000 enrollment--the faculty sense of relatedness diminishes. This is yet another cause--and effect--of the pariah complex. If the faculty had developed a sense of common goals, techniques, concerns--a unique ethos--they would have had something to fall back on. As it is,

they have done little but stand aside.

Teaching -- The third set of phenomena has to do with teaching. The two-year college is a self-styled "teaching institution." However, the calls for innovation heard so frequently in the 1960's have diminished. Whether or not they yielded much depends on one's interpretation. Certainly teaching practices have been modified somewhat and many faculties are well along with televised instruction, learning laboratories, the offering of self-paced learning opportunities, and other instructional modifications. But consider the obstacles. First, there are few criteria for concluding that the innovation enhances student learning to a greater degree than the technique it replaces. Few faculty members have defined the outcomes of their courses so clearly that they can assess the relative value of one technique or another. Second, many innovations were brought in by administrators who were convinced that they had the potential for saving money. But rather than following through cost savings that could be obtained through deliberate assessment of cost/outcome relationships, when the financial crunch came, the administrators took the easy way and began replacing full-time instructors with hourly-rate part-timers.

Still, the cut that affected the individual instructor most is that he tended not to be rewarded for his efforts at instructional modification. Undoubtedly changing an instructional technique is hard work and the true manager of student learning must put in more hours in instructional planning than his counterpart who delivers ad hoc lectures and unvalidated quizzes. But he has little access to assistance. Few colleges have budgets for instructional aides, readers, teaching assistants,

that can be assigned to individual faculty members. Further, the instructional innovator has low visibility in his own college, even less outside it. Should he choose to attempt to meet with like-minded instructors in other parts of the nation he finds poorly defined professional associations in the teaching of his subject field and few funds for travel to meetings. The faculty member who has pursued innovation in his own teaching has had to do so out of a sense of professional obligation and a dedication to the belief that he can help his students learn more if he modifies his technique from the lecture/discussion/recital mode. It is not surprising that relatively few instructors have taken these options.

More to the point, consider how the pariah complex comes into play here. The instructor who would be the innovator in managing student learning is put in a curious position. As he changes his instructional techniques--builds reproducible instructional programs, a learning laboratory, test-item banks--he may well find himself the subject of scorn. Small wonder. His actions implicity call his colleagues' techniques into question. If he is a proselytizer, he may be met with derision. If he chooses to go his own way, he has "sold out to the administration." Purdy notes, "Few teachers will single-handedly adopt practices which move them too far from the norms and practices of colleagues.... The few teachers who do break with their divisions or subject-matter groups to aggressively pursue a new practice either find a new faculty reference group in another division or relate themselves very closely to administrators and support staff members" (Pages 219-220). That is why many instructional innovators have become program heads, laboratory managers, instructional coordinators--all titles that at

once evidence budget lines through which assistance in the form of media technicians and other aides can be provided, while at the same time setting these instructors apart from the rank and file. The group is by no means a majority in any institution but it grows steadily. And the others become ever more isolated.

A note here. Not all the faculty who see themselves as managers of student learning become programs heads--and not all program heads so define themselves. But all managers of learning are set apart. Sometimes they move to another department. Sometimes they stay where they are, effecting liaison with administrators to gain needed assistance but covering it so that their colleagues not dissociate themselves. Further, the use of objectives, media, and valid tests has little to do with the subject matter taught---we see lecturers, discussion leaders, learning laboratory managers, video-tape producers in every field. It has to do with the instructor's interpretation of self in role. The difference between a traditional full-time faculty member and a manager of student learning is in that interpretation. One says, "The ideal learning situation is a few students together with me in a classroom. I like that best. It is comfortable. Students must learn thereby even though I can submit no evidence in your terms that they have." The manager sees student learning as the prime requisite and defines his own worth as a teacher only to the extent that his students did learn. Yet he recognizes that a student may learn with or without his intervention, hence he is free to adopt or reject reproducible media as appropriate.

Here then is a group growing not rapidly but steadily. The program coordinators manage learning laboratories, instructional aides, and otherwise identify themselves with the discipline of instruction. And the full-time faculty stands aside, unable to retard them, uncertain of their own position. Too long they held to the pseudo-academic freedom of the closed classroom door. Too long they spent themselves in efforts to reduce class size. Too long they defined themselves as valuable to the extent they had personal contact with students, resisting any suggestion that they align themselves with defined learning. For certain, they are protected temporarily but they must watch the growth in staffing taking place among the part-timers. They must watch their colleagues being replaced with others not of their ilk.

The full-time faculty members who isolate themselves in their classrooms--certainly, they believe, for all good intentions--are the pariahs. They have chosen to sequester themselves away from trends, both in ideas relating to community college education, and in power. In recent years the community college has tended toward community education, adult education, off-campus activities. Yet the faculty members who see their primary mission as a process of cloistering themselves in classrooms, teaching traditional academic subjects, are not part of this movement.

Similarly, the faculty has pulled itself away repeatedly--one is tempted to say suicidally--from the lines of power within and around the colleges. The faculty have never been in a position of being institutional managers responsible for setting policy; that power has always rested with the board and the administration. But we now see faculty

members refusing even to serve on college committees where at least the illusion of power is still present. We see faculty refusing to become members of speakers bureaus, where they would interact with the community in their areas of presumed expertise. "Serve on a committee? Go off-campus to speak? Why should I?" This is the pariah complex in full blush.

It might be possible for an instructor to make a modification that would be sufficiently unique that he would not be open to the charge of having sold out, and yet it would still allow him considerable freedom to plan his work and to have all the contact with students he needs. Let us call this instructor a community scholar. Let us see him as academic advisor to the community, working with a lay advisory committee. The committee might include local talent in the arts, university professors, businessmen, laymen of any stripe. Let us also have him responsible for the part-time faculty teaching in his subject area. This community scholar would see himself as a full-time, professional person. He would have classes, comprised of the usual "credit" students. He would work in the social processes of his city. He would plan curriculum for the part-time faculty, share strategies, and train them in writing objectives and in gathering evidence of student learning. And he would have assistants.

This model of the instructor would accommodate many needs not now being satisfied. Primarily the community college needs a community connection. It needs lay advisors in the arts, natural sciences, and social sciences, just as it has in the many occupational and para-professional fields. This connection would work both ways. The in-

structor would get advice on needed courses, curriculums, and social and cultural events, taking back to the campus ideas for programs to be offered there and elsewhere. And it would also allow the instructor, hence the entire campus community, to make input on community decisions where a humanist, natural scientist, or social scientist would have much to offer. Rare is the city council that calls upon the local community college science teacher for advice when a decision is to be reached on the location of a park, the humanist for advice on the preservation of an historical building, the teacher of the social sciences when a roadway is to be located. Yet if a member of that council were a member of an advisory committee to the college's programs, he might be more ready to listen.

Other models of involved professionals might also be outlined. The point is that if the community college faculty is to emerge from its posture of isolation it must form itself around something. At one time I thought it would adopt the discipline of instruction--I was younger then and I believed the rhetoric, "teaching faculty," not realizing that was just a euphemism for "faculty who do not conduct research." Now I am less sure. And even though some instructors have become managers of learning laboratories, if they fail to develop, utilize, and publicize measures of student learning, if they become enamoured of their media forms, they will repeat the error that the traditional faculty have made.

The point remains that until the faculty adopts a guiding ethos, until it emerges from its isolation, it is, and will continue to be, a pariah group. It prides itself on privacy, cuts itself away from academic affiliation, refuses to attempt to understand the discipline of instruction, ignores ideas stemming from outsiders, scorns administrators, shuns the community, abandons the part-timers who teach the same courses,

treats with derision its own members who have become managers of student learning. The faculty have become outcasts within their own institutions. The faculty have become recluse.

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